

HISTORY OF
HIGHLAND,
INDIANA

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HISTORY

TOWN OF HIGHLAND

LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA.

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HISTORY - TOWN HIGHLAND
LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA.

HIGHLAND

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In the spring of the year of 1847 a man by the name of Michael Johnston and his wife Judith Johnston started out from Beauvill, Couaghago County, Ohio, to go to Beaura County, Illinois. His wife being a school teacher had received an appointment to teach in one of the schools of Beaura County, Illinois.

In passing through the district which was later named Highlands, Mr. Johnston noticed what a wonderful country this was to hunt in. The trail which the Indians traveled in those days was on the South side of the Ridge. At that time all of the land between the ridge and what is now the Lincoln Highway was submerged under water, reaching a depth in some places as much as sixteen feet. This swampy land was later drained by the digging of the Hart Ditch, in which Mr. Hart lost his life through a caving in.

A little to the North was the Little Calumet River. All of this territory was abounding in game of all kinds.

All these advantages did not escape the eyes of Mr. Johnston. Being a man who liked to hunt and fish - he decided to come back to this territory to make his permanent home. As soon as he brought his wife to Beaura County, Illinois, he returned and settled down in 1848, in what is now the JOHN PAPP place, about 3/4 of a mile east from the center of Highland. He built himself a log house and started to buy land from the Government. He made his living by hunting, and trapping, raising some wheat and corn, and he also traded with the Indians who used to come here to hunt in the fall of the year. In the Fall of the Year of 1848 Mrs. Johnston's parents came and settled close to Johnston's home. Mrs. Johnston's parents name was Solomon Morton and his wife Mary, and four children, Antonette, Emma, Charles and Smith Morton. The Mortons only stayed a few years. They left Highlands and moved and settled in Rossy, Indiana.

In 1848, the nearest neighbors to the Johnston's in 1848 lived on East, about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile East of Hobart, a family by the name of Ed. Mundell. To the West of them was the Brass Tavern located on the corner of Columbia Avenue and Ridge Road. A historical marker now marks the spot.

HISTORY # 2

In 1865 the Johnstons built a new home which now belongs to John Papp. It is still well preserved and in good condition. It is built of white pine and red cedar upon a foundation of nigger heads.

The third family ~~that~~ who came to Highlands was a man by the name of Benjamin Hopkins. He settled on a place a little ^{west} of what is now Camp Beautiful. In the mean time while this was going on there were ~~thus time there were~~ several children in the Community and the need of a school was felt. Mrs. Johnston opened ~~up~~ ^{provided for} a school room in the front part of her home to educate the children in the three R's. She taught them for eleven years.

The first school house was built in 1860 on property now belonging to Andrew Kochalka. A few years ago this building was moved to Highway Avenue, and was remodeled into a home now owned by Mrs. Slocum, and is the residence of Mr. and Mrs. George Rachau and family.

In the year 1884 a new school house was built on property now occupied by the Town Hall. This building served as a school until about 1893, at which time it was ~~1885~~ - was then moved a little East of the center of the Town and is now occupied by Mienderd Kikkert, Public School Janitor. A new building was erected which served as a school house until 1915. Then a new school site was purchased ^{and a home} ~~new~~ building erected which is still serving as a school. In the year 1925 a new addition was added to ^{this building} it which at the present time is where our children go to school.

The old school property was purchased by the Town for a Town Hall.

In the year 1881 the Erie Railroad reached North Judson from the East, then the railroad started building from Chicago and reached Highlands in 1883. To the North of what is now Highlands it was all swamp, when they ^{best} ~~survive~~ reached high ground they called it Highlands, although the Post office for a long time went by the name of Clough Postal Station.

In 1883 the original town of Highlands was platted. ^{This was an area of} which was about five blocks each way which consists of the present streets 1st - 2nd - 3rd - 4th [#] ~~square~~ ^{Highway} ^{which run} ^{and} and 5th going North and South; Highway Avenue, Wicker, Clough and Lincoln Streets going East and West.

When the original Town of Highlands was laid out a large land owner by the name of John Clough erected four houses and a son of Michael

HISTORY # 3

a son of Michael

Johnston, by the name of Rod Johnston, built a grocery store in which also was the Post office. This building is still standing and is owned by the Grimmers, located a little West of the four corners. At the same time a man by the name of Benjamin Swets started a store (which was later changed into a tavern,) in a building erected on the four corners which was later moved a little West and is also owned by the Grimmers.

Under a Democratic administration the Johnstons had the Post Office, and in a republican administration Benjamin Swets had the Post office.

In the year 1890 a man by the name of Clark erected and operated a ~~krout~~ factory. This building was later ~~manu~~ sold to the Riber Bros. who ~~lately~~ sold it to Libby, McNeil, and Libby. Later on Libby also erected a salting shed for pickles and pickled onions, ~~and~~ also a cooking plant for tomatoes.

A great many Dutch people settled in and around Highlands. They were mostly all truck farmers who raised a great deal of cabbage, onions and tomatoes. Libby used to cut from 60 to 100 ton of cabbage a day when the season was open. As many sometimes as fifty to one hundred waggons used to stand in line waiting to be unloaded. Hundreds of car loads of onions ~~were~~ were shipped out of Highlands, mostly red ones to the Southern markets for the colored folks.

~~In those days Chicago having a great many horses the manure was shipped out to the surrounding territories and was used for the fertilization of the fields. Later the automobiles took the place of horses in the City and manure became scarce and costly. The truck farmers could not make a go of it, so they started intensive farming, and selling their produce to the surrounding cities which in the mean time had been growing and furnished them with an ample market.~~

Libby McNeil and Libby not being able to get any more produce moved their plant to Blue Island, Illinois.

In 1900 the first church was built which was a Methodist congregation and is (now the Baptist Church.) In 1907 another church was organized and a church building was erected which is the Christian Reformed Church.

HISTORY #4

In 1905 the Chicago Southern Indiana Railroad built through ~~This railroad~~ Highlands, which is now part of the New York Central Lines. A few years later, some of the farmers organized and formed what was the Lake County Produce Company, they erected ^a ~~A~~ ^{was erected between} krout factory ~~on~~ ^{This business} Lincoln Street and the C. I & S railroad, said krout shed was managed for the Lake County Produce by Herman Meeter.

On March 19, 1905 Michael Johnston died and in January 17 ~~sixth~~ ^{had} 1906 his wife Judith died. The Johnstons ~~having~~ lived in Highlands continuously since 1848.

In 1910 the ~~town~~ ^{Highlands} was incorporated and was divided into three wards, which were later changed to five wards.

~~around the town~~ ^{about the year} ~~the town~~ Merchants Bank was organized ^{and its name was changed to Highland}. This bank operated until February 1932 when it went into ~~receivers~~ ^{the} hands of receivers.

In 1918 a lumber yard was started under management of Garrit Postema ^{Due To} and on account of finanical trouble was taken over by the present owner Mr. Fisher.

^{During} ~~about the year~~ 1925 Mr. Murray Turner, a Hammond Park Commissioner, ^{agitating} started agitation to preserve the last piece of timber standing in Highland ^{for the forming} of a Township Memorial Park for the soldiers and sailors who gave their lives for their country. After a great deal of work and by a special act of the legislature, North Township Memorial Park was formed. ^{with small} The land was aquired principally from the Wicker Estate, also a portion from Peter Wiers, Herman Meeter, Miss Klootwyk and Jacob Wiltjer.

The park was dedicated on June the 14th., 1927 by the Honorable Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States of America.

^{in 1935} According to the last statistics, Highlands has 557 families. It had 4 Grocery stores, 4 Garages, 8 places have filling stations, 4 taverns, and one exclusive lunch room; One place where periodicals and patterned drugs and ice cream ^{were} sold, one hardware store, ^{and} three vegetable stands. It also has 3 Church~~es~~ Organizations, two churches and two schools.

